

REMARKS

Applicants hereby elect the species of Figures 20-21, Claims 1-6, 25-32, 60, 89-91, 107, 108 and 134-136 read on the elected species. The newly drafted Claims 151-154 also read upon the elected species.

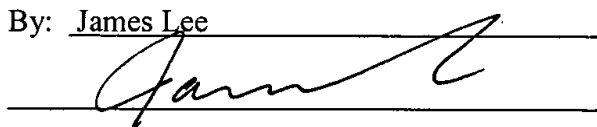
Applicant reserves the right to add claims on additional species if a generic claim is found allowable and further the right to file divisional applications on the non-elected species.

The Office Action provided a restriction requirement on Claims 1-59, but did not consider the Preliminary Amendment of March 12, 2001 which added Claims 60-150. A copy of that Preliminary Amendment is attached hereto, along with the postcard receipt acknowledging the filing of the additional claims in the U.S. Patent Office. Applicant has accordingly selected from the claims that were not addressed in the Restriction Requirement those claims that also read upon the elected species.

If there are any questions with regards to this matter, the undersigned attorney would appreciate a telephone conference.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on July 10, 2003.

By: James Lee

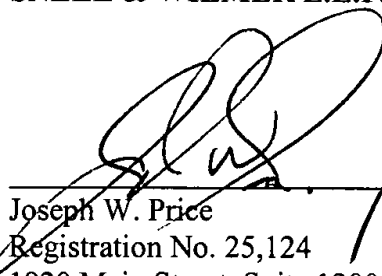


Signature

Dated: July 10, 2003

Very truly yours,

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.



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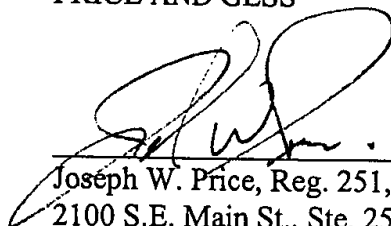
REMARKS

The amendments to the claims are to remove multiple dependencies. Newly drafted Claims 60-150 are within the scope of the original invention and do not add any new subject matter.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview will help further the prosecution of this case, he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the listed telephone number.

Very truly yours,

PRICE AND GESS



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

The claims have been amended as follows:

1 4. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of Claim 2 [or Claim 3],
2 wherein
3 in the surrounding unit forming step, a connection path which connects inside of the
4 surrounding unit to outside of the surrounding unit is formed in the surrounding unit, and
5 in the pressure adjustment sub-step, gas is exhausted from inside of the surrounding unit
6 to outside of the surrounding unit via the connection path.

1 21. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 6
2 to 20] Claim 6, wherein
3 the sealing material softens when a stimulus is given from outside, and
4 in the airtightly seal sub-step, the stimulus is given to the sealing material to soften the
5 sealing material so that gas flow between inside and outside of the surrounding unit is
6 interrupted, and
7 the pressure adjustment sub-step is performed after the airtightly seal sub-step starts.

1 22. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 6 to
2 20] Claim 6, wherein
3 the sealing step includes:
4 a preparatory sealing sub-step for sealing the surrounding unit with another sealing
5 material different from the sealing material before the surrounding unit is sealed with the sealing
6 material in the sealing step, the other sealing material being inserted between the first panel and
7 the second panel at the rim.

23. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 1 to 3 and 6 to 20] Claim 1, wherein

in the sealing step, the surrounding unit is sealed while the first panel and the second panel is pressurized by fastening tools pinching the first panel and the second panel at the rim.

32. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 1 to 3 and 6 to 20] Claim 1 further comprising:

an adhesive application step for applying an adhesive to top of the barrier ribs on the first panel, the applied adhesive being to bond the top of the barrier ribs to the second panel, and the adhesive application step being performed before the surrounding unit forming step, and

in the sealing step, the top of the barrier ribs and the second panel are bonded together by the applied adhesive as the surrounding unit is sealed by the sealing material.

42. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 36 to 41] Claim 36, wherein

whichever comes first out of the sealing step and the bonding step includes, or both of the sealing step and the bonding step include:

a pressure adjustment sub-step for adjusting pressure so that pressure inside the surrounding unit is lower than pressure outside the surrounding unit.

43. (Amended) The gas discharge panel production method of [one of Claims 36 to 41] Claim 36, wherein

in the sealing step, the barrier ribs are observed in terms of shape, and condition for radiating the energy is controlled based on results of the observance.

1 51. (Amended) The exhaust pipe sealing off apparatus of Claim 49 [or Claim 50],
2 wherein
3 the restriction member is disposed at tow locations or more along the exhaust pipe
4 between the heating unit and the exhaust pipe.

1 53. (Amended) A gas discharge panel produced with a production method defined in
2 [one of Claims 1 to 3 and 6 to 20] Claim 1.

3 Claims 60-150 have been added.